



Hoosier



Headlines

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Issue 38

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Heart to Heart ... with Hardisty



Technical Team Leaders were at the state office last week discussing this unseasonable weather. Because of the early spring we've had, landowners are getting out in the fields earlier this year and are able to put more conservation on the ground. I want to encourage all NRCS employees to continue working with our landowners and assisting them in getting practices applied this year.



While many of us have been enjoying the warmer weather, landowners in the southeast have been cleaning up after disastrous tornados ripped through the southern portion of the state. Many thanks to Jennifer Kipper, Ruth Hackman, Chris Downing, Tyler Martindale, and Darrell Nicholson as they reacted quickly to the devastation and were able to bring in almost 1 million dollars in Emergency Watershed Protection Program funding to assist these communities.



National Volunteer Week is April 15-21st. This is a perfect time to recognize our Earth Team volunteers. To date, we have 46 volunteers throughout Indiana logging in approximately 625 hours. I encourage you to continue signing up volunteers and utilizing them in helping accomplish our mission of Helping People Help the Land.



As you know, soil health is our top priority in Indiana. I hope everyone has taken the time to review Indiana's soil health strategy and is carrying out its content. If you haven't read this strategy yet, please make it a priority to do so. The strategy can be found on the web at: http://www.in.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/Soil%20Health/soil_health.html. ***"The art of land doctoring is being practiced with vigor, but the science of land health is yet to be born."*** – Aldo Leopold.

Jane E. Hardisty

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****** Employee Spotlight ******

Brandy Daggett, District Conservationist—Clinton County

Q: How did you become interested in conservation?

I first became interested in conservation as an NRCS student trainee in Michigan. It was then that I recognized the importance of all the conservation practices that NRCS suggested to producers. My last two years of college I chose classes which helped me learn as much as I could to better my knowledge for a career with NRCS.

Q: What do you enjoy most working for NRCS and Indiana landowners?

I am very thankful and feel blessed to have a job/position with NRCS. I like being in the field and doing general conservation plans and figuring out possible alternatives to suggest to the customer. I also enjoy being given the opportunity to do some traveling to advance my learning and education.

Q: Who has had the most influence on your career?

I would have to say the person that has been the most influential on my career was District Conservationist, Edwin Almodovar* when I was working as a soil conservationist. When Edwin felt I was ready for another challenge in my career he guided and encouraged me to move on. There has also been another person here in Indiana that has been very influencing on my career. This person has showed me the “ropes” of IN NRCS from day one starting my career here in Indiana.

Q: I understand you have an interesting hobby in horse barrel racing. Tell us a little bit about that.

Yes, my mom and fiancé (and probably soon my son) take our hobby of “Barrel racing” pretty competitively in the summer months. Barrel Racing (3 barrels set up in a cloverleaf pattern) is one event/class that we compete in at horse shows. We also like to run Poles (6 poles set up in a line) Flags and Dash. I have also competed in rodeos. In my spare time, horses are involved in some way. My dad and brother race sprint

cars (oval dirt tract) and also take their hobby very competitively in the summer months. My brother is a third generation race car driver on my dad’s side of the family. When I find time I like to go and watch my brother and dad race.

Q: Do you have any professional or personal goals for 2012?

I have a lot of Professional goals that I would love to accomplish but my most general one this year is to become as educated as I possibly can be about soil health ,and still stay on top of my regular duties. The end of the season last year I started riding a new horse, she is 6 years old this year. My personal goal is to become a team with this horse and prove that we can run and win with a high level of competition, so that next year I can have confidence to enter some bigger horse shows.



*Edwin is currently the State Conservationist in Puerto Rico

Hoosier Happenings

KUDOS to...

**** Kudos for the support of Scot Haley, Joe Updike, and Derek Thompson in working with me on the soil health demonstrations at the Indiana Professional Dairy Producers regional meetings in Decatur and Goshen. We tag teamed the demos and discussions, and our topic generated more questions and interaction among the participants than any of the others...we did good! We made great in-roads toward soil health with Indiana's dairy producers. — submitted by Shannon Zezula, State Resource Conservationist**

****Kudos to Victor Shelton, Mike Wigginton, Tom Held, Travis Gogel, Ruth Hackman, and Mike Hughes for stepping up and giving the soil health demos at the Indiana Professional Dairy Producers regional meetings that I was unable to attend. I heard great compliments from the IPDP leaders on NRCS's messages. — submitted by Shannon Zezula, State Resource Conservationist**

****Kudos to Jennifer Kipper, Ruth Hackman, Chris Downing, Tyler Martindale and Darrell Nicholson for their quick response time to the southern Indiana tornados. The assistance of these four individuals brought in almost 1 million dollars of EWP money to southern Indiana. Job well done! - submitted by Jane Hardisty, State Conservationist**

HARRISON RECEIVES CONSERVATION AWARD



This year Dearborn County Soil and Water Conservation District presented the "Conservation Partner" award to Clint Harrison, NRCS District Conservationist. Clint was the acting District Conservationist for Dearborn/Ohio Counties for most of 2011 and he did an outstanding job supporting the staff and serving the landowners.

Each year the Dearborn County Soil and Water Conservation District recognizes a variety of key partners that contribute to the district in some way. The "Conservation Partner" presentation at the annual meeting is awarded to those that have supported the SWCD staff with planning and technical work; and/or to agribusinesses that contribute to the goal of educating the public about conservation; and/or to landowners whom have excelled in applying conservation to the land.

Congratulations Clint!

'YOUNG FARMERS' EDUCATED ON SOIL HEALTH

On Tuesday, February 28th, District Conservationist Kelley Barkell and Northeast Area Resource Soil Scientist Scot Haley met with the Adams County Farm Bureau Young Farmers Association to discuss soil health and conservation programs. Scot gave an excellent presentation on soil health to the group of 16 young men and women between the ages of 18-35. Kelley and members of the Wells and Adams district staff followed Scot and discussed conservation programs available to help improve soil health. The meeting was well received and this group of presenters was asked to come back for future meetings.

"I felt like this group was a great place to get our message out to the younger generation of farmers about soil health and conservation programs," said Barkell.

Currently there are 49 chapters of Farm Bureau Young Farmers in the state. Barkell encourages all NRCS and SWCD employees to contact their local Farm Bureau Young Farmers Association and set up a meeting to discuss the importance of soil health.

RC&D MRBI LEGISLATIVE TOUR A HUGE SUCCESS

With funding from NRCS and the Walton Family Foundation, the Greater Wabash River RC&D, along with Soil and Water Conservation Districts and many other partners are working to improve soil and water quality of the Mississippi River Basin and ultimately, the hypoxia issue in the Gulf of Mexico.



On March 15, the Greater Wabash RC&D held a conservation tour to promote their work on the Mississippi River Basin Initiative (MRBI) projects in 5 north central Indiana Counties.

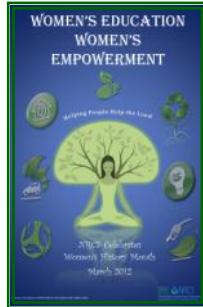
The tour began at the Carl Cox farm to learn about soil health and hear about changes the Cox family has made with funds received from MRBI. Special guests included staff from the offices of U.S. Representative Todd Rokita and U.S. Senator Dan Coats. The group then traveled to three other farms in Tippecanoe and Clinton Counties to talk with farmers and staff to learn about animal waste utilization, cover crops, and to discuss equipment modifications need to improve soil health. The tour wrapped up with Purdue Agricultural Research Service (ARS) Doug Smith discussing his efforts to document the impact of these new conservation practices are having in the Wildcat Creek watershed.

Throughout the day, the success of this collaborative partnership was evident. Farmers expressed their appreciation for funds that help them change the way they work with the land and technical assistance from agency staff. The RC&D has leveraged funds from a number of sources to help extend the reach of this project which is in its second year and going strong.

**** SPECIAL EMPHASIS ****

Federal Women's Month

Women's History Month in the United States grew out of a weeklong celebration of women's contributions to culture, history and society organized by the school district of Sonoma, California, in 1978. Presentations were given at dozens of schools, hundreds of students participated in a "Real Woman" essay contest and a parade was held in downtown Santa Rosa.



A few years later, the idea had caught on within communities, school districts and organizations across the country. In 1980, President Jimmy Carter issued the first presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8 as National Women's History Week. The U.S. Congress followed suit the next year, passing a resolution establishing a national celebration. Six years later, the National Women's History Project successfully petitioned Congress to expand the event to the entire month of March.

Each year, the National Women's History Project selects a theme that highlights achievements by distinguished women in specific fields, from medicine and the environment to art and politics. The 2012 theme, "Women's Education—Women's Empowerment," pays tribute to pioneering teachers and advocates who helped women and other groups gain access to advanced learning. Honorees include Emma Hart Willard, a higher education pioneer; Charlotte Forten Grimké, an educator and advocate for the education of African Americans; Annie Sullivan, a disability education architect known for her work with Helen Keller; Gracia Molina de Pick, a feminist educational reformer; and Brenda Flywithhawks, an American Indian educator.

For more information about Women's History Month, contact Kamara Holmes, Federal Women's Program Manager, by email at kamara.holmes@in.usda.gov.

Partnership Links

IN Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts, Bi-Weekly

Updates: www.iaswcd.org/whatsnew/index.html

IN Conservation Partnership: www.iaswcd.org/icp/index.html

IN Dept. of Environmental Management: www.in.gov/idem

IN Dept. of Natural Resources: www.in.gov/dnr

IN State Dept. of Agriculture, Division of Soil Conservation:

<http://www.in.gov/isda/soil/>

Purdue University: www.purdue.edu

USDA Farm Service Agency: www.fsa.usda.gov

Hoosier Happenings (cont.)

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION WEEK

NRCS is celebrating National Volunteer Week April 15-21 by honoring Earth Team volunteers and expressing appreciation for their dedicated service and commitment to conservation. The Earth Team is NRCS' volunteer workforce.

NRCS State Conservationist Jane Hardisty said Earth Team volunteers are instrumental in assisting NRCS with their conservation efforts. Last year, 1,772 volunteers donated a total of 23,177 in Indiana.

"That's worth \$495,060.72 of benefit to our customers and savings to the taxpayers," said Hardisty. "These are impressive numbers and we are grateful for the help, but also recognize that more conservation work needs to be done."

Earth Team volunteers allow us to stretch available resources and help us put additional conservation practices on the ground. Their volunteer efforts help us improve our land and wildlife habitats, clean our water and air, and help us improve the environment for everyone."

To learn more about the ETV Program, go to:

www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/people/volunteers

EARTH TEAM VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTION

Often times, finding a position for a volunteer can be a difficult task, especially when you have several other things on your plate. To help out our field staff, Hoosier Headlines will be highlighting an Earth Team Volunteer



Position Description every issue to encourage Indiana NRCS staff to go out and find volunteers.

CONSERVATION PHOTOGRAPHER

Major Duties

1. Photograph examples of soil and water erosion.
2. Photograph examples of successful conservation practices.
3. Photograph conservation education activities.

Time Commitment

Negotiable

Knowledge and Skills Required

- Experience using a digital camera with flash
- Proper framing and picture composition
- Familiarity with photo software

Personnel Update

REASSIGNMENTS

Barry Fisher, State Agronomist, on the Technology Staff reassigned to State Soil Health Specialist position effective 3-25-12.
Tony Bailey, Soil Conservationist, on the Technology Staff reassigned to Conservation Agronomist position effective 3-25-12.
Evan Devine converted from SCEP to Soil Conservationist, GS-457-5 at Greensburg FO effective 5-6-12.
Christopher Shoults converted from SCEP to Soil Conservationist, GS-457-5 at Princeton FO effective 5-14-12.
Evan Smith converted from SCEP to Soil Conservationist, GS-457-5 at Kokomo FO effective 5-20-12.

SELECTIONS FROM VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Theresa Hadley selected for State Office Assistant position on the STC Staff effective 5-6-12
Curtis Knueven selected for Resource Management Specialist on the Northwest Area Office staff in Lafayette effective 5-6-12.
Tiffany Davidson selected for Secretary (OA) position on the STC Staff effective 5-6-2012.
Patrick Glassman selected for SCEP Student Trainee (Soil Consv) at South Bend FO effective 5-6-12.
Lori Beeker selected for SCEP Student Trainee (Soil Consv) at Greensburg CIT effective 5-20-12.
Matthew Crowe selected for SCEP Student Trainee (Soil Consv) at Terre Haute FO effective 5-20-12.
Lori Nussbaum selected for SCEP Student Trainee (Soil Sci) at Indianapolis PO effective 6-3-12.
Arellys Ortiz Arroyo selected for SCEP Student Trainee (Soil Consv) at Bloomington FO effective 6-3-12.

RETIREMENTS

None at this time

FEATURED WEBSITE—NATIONAL NRCS DISTRIBUTION CENTER

Looking for publication for your next field day or event? Make sure you check out the National NRCS Distribution Center website! This site has over 200 publications, videos and posters that can be shipped directly to your office! And, turn around time typically takes less than two weeks. Check out the site today!

<http://nrcspad.sc.egov.usda.gov/DistributionCenter/>

Need assistance in ordering your publications? Contact Kris Vance at: kris.vance@in.usda.gov

Mark Your Calendar

APRIL

18: Leadership Team
19: Soil Scientist Training
24: Northwest Area Meeting
25: Southwest Area Meeting
30: Southeast Annual Program Review

MAY

6: LDP Trip to National Headquarters
8: SAC/FAC Meeting
9: Northeast Annual Meeting
Southeast Annual Meeting
23: Leadership Team
24: Area Specialist Meetings
29: Northwest Area Meeting
30: Southwest Area Meeting

JUNE

5: Northeast Area Meeting
12: SAC/FAC Meeting
Indiana State Technical Committee Meeting
13: Southeast Area Meeting
20: Leadership Team
21: IFAC
26: Northwest Area Meeting
27: Southwest Area Meeting

